INTERAGENCY CONNECTION

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Strategic Connections resulting in Unique Solutions

Chair's Corner

At the time I am writing this article, the National FEB meeting is quickly approaching. I'm hoping in September to share any information that may be useful to field agencies!

Our ***Leadership FEB*** class recently visited National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Johnson Space Center in Houston. This cohort has been together four months now and have completed half of their program. Having the opportunity to meet almost all of them, I applaud their effort, enthusiasm and thirst for information!

2018 Leadership FEB Class

We have partnered with FEMA to host two different Continuity of Operations classes in November. The L-548, COOP Program Manager's Course will be November 26-27, 2018 and the L-550, COOP Planner's Course will be November 28-30, 2018. Registration forms are provided in this newsletter for your convenience. Please share widely! These classes are for federal, state and local government employees (at no cost to the participants). It is important that they follow the instructions and complete the Form 119 in order to reserve their seat in the training.

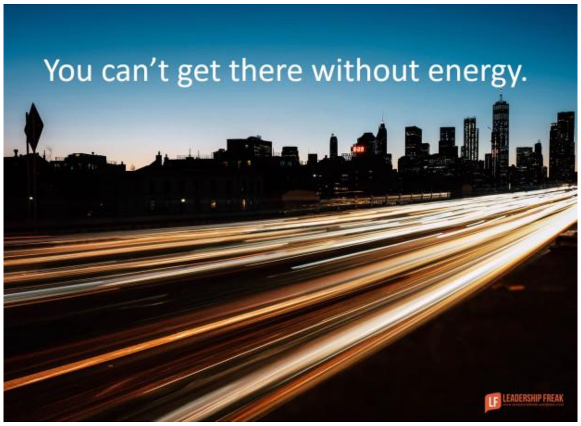
We also have training scheduled as an opportunity for Executives and senior managers to receive high level "Crisis Communication" training. This is designed to be a small group, intense learning experience to increase effectiveness of your communication competency in the event of a disaster. The training will focus on the things that can "make" or "break" senior leaders:

- How to maintain a positive relationship with the media in the first hours of a crisis.
- How to be a team player rather than merely an individual agency spokesperson.
- How to maintain a good media relationship after the crisis is over.

I hope you will take advantage of all the activities/events our FEB offers!

Tim Jeffcoat, Chair

THREE WAYS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY



#1. Fuel, manage, and monitor energy, first your own, then others.

You can't get there with an empty tank. It's not flashy, but in order to fuel energy in others you need to keep gas in your own tank.

1. Engage in meaningful work. Do stuff that matters to you. Energy goes up when you do what matters.
2. Do the work that matters most when you're at your best. The work that matters most is connection, asking questions, and affirming progress.
3. Notice the positive attributes of others. Weaknesses grab your attention. Schedule time in the day to say something good to people.
4. Turn off electronics. When possible, put your laptop in the closet. Go for a walk and leave your cell phone home.

Taken from the LeadershipFreak: https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/06/12/three-ways-to-make-a-difference-today/

#2. Show interest in people.

Don't pry into personal lives, but show interest in people as people by asking questions.

1. What got you interested in this work?
2. What do others appreciate about you?
3. How did you happen to get this job?
4. What do you do to relax?

The need to deliver results distracts some leaders from relationship building.

#3. Stay positive.

Don't minimize challenges in the name of positivity. You look like an idiot if you pretend the house isn't on fire.

Maximize opportunity and potential. When you're worried about current challenges, tell the team you're counting on them.

"I"m counting on you," is better than, "I'm really worried about this."

Use inquiry to fuel positivity.

1. What do we need to do to move the ball forward?
2. What's preventing us from making this decision right now?
3. Would you take on this challenge?
4. How can I help?
5. What's next?

Notice when conversations focus on the past, uncontrollable circumstances, or complaints. Find ways to turn people's attention toward the future.

Your Friends May Be Key to a Healthy Aging Brain

Getting along well with others may do more than just make life less stressful for seniors. A new study suggests that warm, supportive relationships might give a big memory boost to the aging brain.

Researchers found that so-called SuperAgers -- people 80 or older with the memory powers of those 50 to 65 -- were more likely than those with average memory to report positive relationships in their lives.

"One explanation is that maintaining friendships keeps your brain active and engaged," said study co-author Emily Rogalski. She's an associate professor at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago.

"You could think of this like healthy exercise for your brain," Rogalski added.

The study doesn't prove that positive relationships improve memory, however. It's possible that their connection could be more complicated.

For the new study, Rogalski and her colleagues studied 31 SuperAgers, which she described as "a unique group of individuals who are defying the odds of how one ages from a memory standpoint."

The participants were all older than 80, had memory skills equal to the average among 50- to 65-year-olds, and also had at least the average thinking skills of a person 80 or older.

The researchers compared them to 19 other seniors 80 or older who had average memory and thinking skills for a person of their age.

Both groups of seniors were "cognitively healthy," Rogalski said. The median age of both groups was about 84, most were female and nearly all were white.

The SuperAgers scored an average of 40 points on a scale measuring whether they have positive relationships with other people, defined as "satisfying, warm, trusting, high-quality relationships with others." The other group scored an average of 36 points. Rogalski declined to describe how significant that difference is, but she did say it's meaningful on a statistical level.

She also added that research has shown that mentally challenging activities boost the creation of new brain cells and new neural connections.

The research didn't delve into types of positive relationships, however, leaving it unclear whether marriages, friendships or other personal connections might have more or less to do with memory.

Then there's the question of whether having better relationships with other people boosts your memory skills, or whether people with better memories attract more friends because they're mentally sharper.

According to Karen Fingerman, a professor who studies aging at the University of Texas at Austin, "We can't really say which causes which. But there have been other studies that show that engaging with a wide variety of social partners, friends and families is better for cognition over time."

It makes sense that social connections boost the brain, Fingerman said.

"Humans are innately social creatures, and our brains are wired for social stimulation," she explained. "It is likely that engaging with friends and family may involve stimulating conversations, problem-solving, or activities that enhance well-being and cognitive functioning."

Fingerman added that it may be easier for people to stoke positive relationships than participate in other healthy behaviors that can seem more difficult, like exercising and eating healthily.

"Most people struggle to do those things," she said. "On the other hand, spending time with people we enjoy -- our friends and family -- can also be beneficial. And that is often a pretty easy prescription to follow."

The study was published online recently in the journal *PLoS ONE*.

https://fepblue.webmdhealth.com/!newsletters?id=AJQo-Mo_S6RHYILQ2EB3_-dVx3pWRTZOnOX9r7uVx5nQ0&s=14148&mrdid=4e29e8db-3bd6-e711-8b14-a0369f37142e

How to Prioritize: What happened? How did I get here?

Julie wondered as she waited in the doctor's office for a prescription to help her get some sleep. Her life had been consumed with competing priorities, constant technology, and the dominating self-talk of, I can get it all done. and Everything is important.

This self-inflicted reflection time made her realize that she needed to do a better job prioritizing.

I want my life to be consumed with activities, meetings, and endless work. I want to work so hard that I don't have time to think about what is important. – Says no one ever.

This frenetic pace of juggling and running is at the core of many of our problems.

We spend so much time working that we develop health issues.
The pressure of increasing demands at the office makes us appear as strangers to our family members.
We take on too many projects and find ourselves overworked and under delivering.

How do we prioritize effectively?
The answer, prioritization is a process, not a one-time event.

I like to think of it as a compass that we periodically check throughout our day, week, and month. And if we don't check it regularly, there is a good chance we will be headed somewhere we don't want to be.
When we don't prioritize we start to feel helpless, thinking,
My life is not mine and I don't have a choice.

Choose vs. Complain
Do you take ownership for prioritizing your day or continuously complain how out of control it is?

If you are of the mindset that you can't influence your day, then don't even attempt to prioritize. You will be left with some disempowering thoughts like: Why bother on planning my priorities, they are just going to get put aside by my boss?

Instead, start by identifying your top three priorities at work and those of your boss. Guess if you have to.

This type of focus will allow you to start to see your contribution more visibly.

In a Harvard Business Review article, Stop Chasing Too Many Priorities, the research found that as an executive team's priority list grew company revenue declined.

Getting Distracted vs. Going Deep

The reason why some people feel stuck is that they haven't generated enough momentum in any one direction.

Can our people do deep work? That is interruption-free focus periods of 25 minutes. Or have we created a culture of constant noise and interruptions like, Hey, did you get my email?

What activities or projects would benefit from deep work?
Today people and organizations are moving a hundred things an inch rather than four things a mile.

Use future-based reflection.
What did we do last month or quarter that was impactful?
Now, if we look back on this month what will our answer be?

Eric Papp is the author of two books: Leadership By Choice and 3 Values Of Being An Effective Person. He is a keynote speaker and consultant. His blog provides valuable content that people can apply to work and improve the quality of their life.

http://www.ericpapp.com/

Loyal Employees are your Most Valuable Asset!

An employee's relationship with their manager sets the tone for their level of commitment to the organization's success. Gallup research shows that a mind-boggling 70% of an employee's motivation is influenced by his or her manager. It's no wonder employees don't leave companies; they leave managers. Disengaged employees can cost companies millions of dollars from lost productivity, damages from employee negligence and negative publicity due to poor customer service. Organizations know how important it is to have motivated, engaged employees, but most fail to hold managers accountable for making it happen.

7 Things a Manager can do to Improve Employee Morale:

1. Connect with staff- As a leader you should be seen. Make your presence felt. Don't just lock yourself in your office whole day and only communicate with staff when you want something done. Get to know your employees. Find out about their interests.

2. Show employees that you genuinely care. If an employee is dealing with an issue whether personally or professionally, show Empathy. Advocate for your team. Stand up for them. Don't throw your people under the bus when things go wrong.

3. Practice Open and Honest two-way Communication. Keep employees informed. Don't let them have to be hear of upcoming changes through the grapevine. Listening to employees - Have an atmosphere where employees ideas and suggestions are valued. Don't have surveys and suggestion boxes then when feedback is given, you simply ignore it.

4. Be fair and neutral. Treat everyone fairly. Don't pick favorites. Lead by example. Be known as a person of integrity.

5. Empower Employees. Provide them with the proper tools, then give them room to get the job done. Don't micromanage!

6. Reward and Recognition- Offer incentives. Show employees how much you value and appreciate them. Always reward staff for good work, and not only top performers include those who are improving or doing their best. Be generous with "Thank Yous."

7. Recommend employees for training and new opportunities. Staff members can interpret an employer's unwillingness to invest in training as a disregard for their professional development. Acknowledge and encourage strengths, recognize the different skills they possess and recommend training and development opportunities.

If you believe, that employees are your most valuable asset, you will create a healthy work atmosphere and provide them with the tools and support to do their jobs effectively.

It's important that managers focus on relationship building and encourage a family atmosphere at work. Get to know your employees, meet them where they are and be flexible. Many organizations treat their employees as if they are a commodity. They use them until they can get no more out of them, and then cast them aside. This leads to poor morale, lower productivity, and higher turnover.

Loyal employees are your most valuable asset. Don't take them for granted or treat them poorly. They use your internal tools and systems and interact with customers. They are your best brand ambassadors. Loyalty is a two-way street. You can't buy loyalty, but you can certainly foster and nurture it. **Employees who have been pushed to the point where they no longer care, will not go the extra mile.** They will not take the initiative to solve problems. They will end up treating customers the same way you treat them. Employees are the heartbeat of the company. And if the heart stops beating...What will happen?

Written by Brigette Hyacinth, Author of The Future of Leadership: Rise of Automation, Robotics and Artificial Intelligence and Keynote Speaker
https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/loyal-employees-your-most-valuable-asset-brigette-hyacinth/

7 WAYS HUMILITY CONTRIBUTES TO SELF-CONFIDENCE

Formulas for developing confidence are only outstripped by the numbers of people who lack confidence.

1. Think positive thoughts.
2. Dress for success.
3. Fake it till you make it.
4. Smile.
5. Stand with your hands on your hips like Wonder Woman.

7 Ways Humility Contributes to Self-Confidence:

#1. Humility finds courage in failure stories.

Ask successful people how they screwed up and what they did about it.

Success stories feel encouraging, but they're intimidating when you realize how far you have to go. You might as well give up now.

Failure stories – from successful leaders – are more encouraging than success stories.

#2. Humility practices actively and wisely.

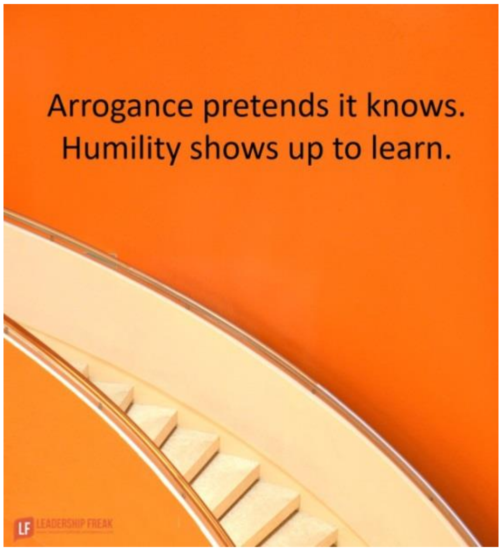
Practice increases confidence.

Don't ask your grandmother to help you prepare for your next tough conversation or public presentation.

Practice with people who expect a lot from you and themselves.

Arrogance pretends it knows. Humility shows up to learn.

Lack of confidence might help you find your greatest contribution.



#3. Humility starts.

Don't wait until you feel confident to start.

The only way to beat fear is to grab a stick and chase it down.

You never overcome fear by thinking about overcoming fear.

#4. Humility show up to serve.

Arrogance focuses on itself. Humility focuses on others. Self-consciousness is a symptom of arrogance.

Turn outward:

1. What are you doing when you bring the most value to others and joy to yourself?
2. How might you apply your best skills to new situations?
3. Who needs what you have?

Asking questions, for me, is like a pair of old sneakers. Yes, I have to engage my brain and pay attention, but I've learned that my greatest value often comes through curiosity.

#5. Humility determines how to best show up.

#6. Humility seeks a coach.

#7. Humility considers the worst that could happen.

Humility is essential to self-confidence.

https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/05/24/7-ways-humility-contributes-to-self-confidence/

How to Run a Conference Panel That Isn't Horrible

Whenever I go to a conference, the thing I dread most is panels.

A typical panel is a show about nothing. Sure, it worked on Seinfeld—but they had comedic geniuses obsessing over the perfect script and a whole cast of skilled actors and producers making it sing. (Though panels do have some recurring characters: I'm sure you've met The Rambler, The Spotlight Hog, and The Mansplainer.)

Panels aren't going away any time soon. Since I end up sitting on them and moderating them on a regular basis, I decided to see if I could fix them.

And by fix them, I mean run a panel that doesn't ruin your day. Here are my guidelines:

CHOOSING THE CAST

1. Keep it small. In my experience, the best panels have a moderator and no more than two or three guests. Just like in teams, less is more. Larger panels create more communication and coordination difficulties. It's impossible to find a rhythm with six people on stage. People just sit there waiting to make their point.

2. Invite people who complement each other. I've suffered through panels that flop because the participants have nothing in common and because they have totally redundant perspectives. You need a mix of similarities and differences. In psychology it's called optimal distinctiveness. Every panelist should fit into a common topic but stand out based on having unique insights or experiences.

3. Design for relationships between the panelists. A group of strangers sitting on stage together is a recipe for disaster. A great panel feels like being a fly on the wall for an actual conversation between friends or sparring partners.

Don't just think about the qualities that you want in individual panelists or moderators; invite people who actually know each other. They're used to having conversations together, they're familiar with each other's views, and they're more likely to be comfortable debating and disagreeing respectfully.

If they haven't connected before, have them spend some time getting to know each other. Even a quick email exchange followed by five minutes face-to-face backstage can help build rapport and give time to compare notes on what to cover (and avoid).

SETTING THE STAGE

4. Encourage the panelists to talk to each other. A rookie mistake is when panelists are all having individual conversations with the moderator. That's just a bunch of one-on-one interviews slapped together—you would never do that in a meeting or at a party.

Maryellen Reilly introduced me to a creative way of nudging authentic discussion: invite each participant to ask a question of one other panelist. Along with catapulting them into a natural back-and-forth, it's fascinating to see what they most want to learn from one another.

5. Ask them to keep their comments short. The most compelling responses are usually no more than 60 seconds. That's where you start pushing the limits of conversational attention span and violating the natural flow of back-and-forth. Go longer and you're just doing sequential monologues. Short answers open the door for burstiness, where it sounds like the panel is literally bursting with ideas. The energy picks up, people veer off script and actually build on one another, and there's more room for unexpected wisdom and spontaneous humor.

6. Don't let every panelist answer every question. That immediately devolves into mind-numbing turn-taking. No one has something interesting or informative to say on all the topics.

7. Tell them you might interrupt them. The moderator's job is to guide the conversation to make it worthwhile for the audience. So if panelists start rambling, you need to jump in with a comment, a fresh question, or a redirect. At first I struggled to do that—I was afraid of being disagreeable. But I found that when I told panelists in advance that I might interrupt them, the awkwardness melted away. It's not rude to interrupt them once you have their permission.

PREPARING THE SCRIPT

8. Start by asking for a story. Panels fall flat when participants never get to share their knowledge—and the audience has no context for why they're there. Sometimes moderators try to solve that by

How to Run a Conference Panel That Isn't Horrible (cont'd)

reading lengthy bios for each panelist, which is a huge waste of time. Just introduce them with a few highlights that explain why they're on stage, and invite them each to tell a story on the topic.

9. Pose questions that make the audience—and the panelists—think. The richest questions often start with why (to get at motivation/purpose) and how (to get at strategy/tactics). It can also help to surface tension, which doesn't have to be with other panelists; you can prompt them to challenge conventional wisdom or their own past experiences.

Two of my favorite questions are "What's the worst career advice you've gotten?" and "What's something you believed early in your career that you now think is wrong?" Sometimes it helps to give them the questions in advance, both for peace of mind and for reflection time.

Another trick is to have the audience ask their questions at the beginning of the panel instead of the end. As Kumar Garg points out, it helps the panelists get more specific and more practical.

10. Run a lightning round. Come ready with a few questions that panelists can answer in a word or a sentence. Other than an opening story, that's the only time you want everyone to chime in: it's a great way to get diverse ideas on the table swiftly and represent everyone's voice. It can be a fun appetizer early on if there's a burning question where you want to surface a range of views, a nice interjection to keep the conversation moving if it's dragging in the middle, or a strong closing if you want to wrap up with a light, memorable Q&A.

It's always reassuring to hear successful people open up about their vices. What was your worst idea ever? What task do you procrastinate on? When do you feel the most self-doubt? ***

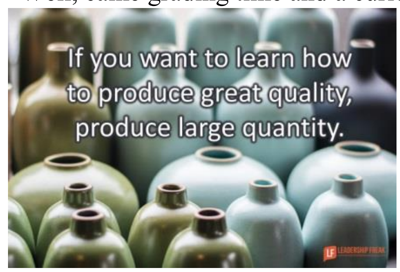
Adam Grant is an organizational psychologist at Wharton, a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author, and the host of the TED podcast WorkLife. He shares insights in his free monthly newsletter, GRANTED.

https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-run-conference-panel-isnt-horrible-adam-grant/

Which Comes First—Quantity or Quality

"The ceramics teacher announced on opening day that he was dividing the class into two groups. All those on the left side of the studio, he said, would be graded solely on the QUANTITY of work they produced, all those on the right side solely on its QUALITY."

"Well, came grading time and a curious fact



emerged: the works of highest quality were ALL produced by the group being rated for QUANTITY.

It seems that while the 'quantity' group was busily turning out piles of work – and learning from their mistakes – the 'quality' group had sat theorizing about perfection, and in the end had little more to show for their efforts than grandiose theories and a pile of dead clay."

David Bayles and Ted Orland: Art & Fear: Observations on the Perils (and Rewards) of Artmaking

Learn-as-you-go when:

1. Learning is valued in organizational life.
2. You'll do the project again. Learning-as-you-go is most valuable when you'll use what you learn in the same context, again and again.
3. Experience is transferable to other projects.
4. Falling short won't be catastrophic. Ask yourself, "What's the worst that could happen?" If the worst isn't that bad, what are you waiting for?
5. The people you serve know and trust you.
6. Growth and risk-taking is valued in the organization.
7. Your track-record trends upward. When your track-record trends downward, it's usually better to hold back and perfect a win.
8. The timeline is short and the initiative is worth the effort.
9. The leadership team supports you as you learn-as-you-go.
10. Learning excites you more than failure defeats you.

Perfect before you go: Perfect-before-you-go matters when stakes are high. Think of brain surgery and flying airplanes.

I tend to be a learn-as-you-go person. I'm learning to listen to those who think differently. Sometimes I ask myself, what would my perfect-before-you-go friends do.

https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/07/10/which-comes-first-quantity-or-quality/

FEMA-certified "Train the Trainer" COOP Training Courses

Through a partnership between FEMA and the Houston FEB, we will be hosting the L-548 course in Houston to leverage resources and multiply results. Upon successful completion of the course, the attendee receives a FEMA certificate.

- The Continuity of Operations (COOP) Manager's Training Course is to provide COOP training for Program Managers at the Federal, State, Tribal, and Local levels of government. This training includes a train-the-trainer module to equip the managers to train the course to others.

Upon completion of this course, participants should be able to do the following: Define COOP; Explain the business benefits of COOP; identify the elements of a viable COOP capability; identify the processes, resources, and tasks necessary to implement and manage a successful COOP Program.

There is no cost for the training; however, the employee's agency is responsible for all travel costs associated with this training.

Course title:	L548 – COOP Program Manager's Course
Location:	Leland, 1919 Smith Street, Houston, First Floor Conference Room
Date:	November 26-27, 2018
Time:	*8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.*

Name:	*Student ID:
Agency Address:	
Certificate mailing address:	
Phone:	Email:

***Obtain a FEMA Student Identification (SID) number:**

Step 1: To register, go to https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid
Step 2: Click on the "Need a FEMA SID" box on the right side of the screen.
Step 3: Follow the instructions and provide the necessary information to create your account.
Step 4: You will receive an email with your SID number. You should save this number in a secure location.
Step 5: Utilize your SID in Block 3 of the Form 119-25-1 (a signed copy MUST accompany this form)

A signed copy of FEMA Form 119-25-1 must also accompany this form (available on our website at www.oklahoma.feb.gov/Forms/FEMA119-25-1.pdf)

Employee Date

Please return this registration form to the FEB Office ***no later than November 1, 2018*** in order to ensure sufficient materials.

Email registration form to: LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov

FEMA-certified "Train the Trainer" COOP Training Courses

Through a partnership between FEMA and the Houston FEB, we will be hosting the L-550 course in Houston to leverage resources and multiply results. Upon successful completion of the course, the attendee receives a FEMA certificate.

- The Continuity of Operations (COOP) Planner's Training Course is to provide COOP training for Program Managers at the Federal, State, Local, and Tribal levels of government. This training includes a train-the-trainer module to equip the managers to train the course to others.

This course provides instructions for developing or updating a Continuity Plan according to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Continuity Guidance.

There is no cost for the training; however, the employee's agency is responsible for all travel costs associated with this training.

Course title:	L550 – COOP Planner's Training Course
Location:	Leland, 1919 Smith Street, Houston, First Floor Conference Room
Date:	November 28-30, 2018
Time:	*8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.*

Prerequisites for taking this class: Successful completion of COOP Managers Train-the-Trainer Course (E/L/G or IS548); and a COOP Plan (a final or draft plan will be required for activities during the course). Each student should bring a copy of their current plan or draft plan.

Name:	*Student ID:
Agency Address:	
Certificate mailing address:	
Phone:	Email:

***Obtain a FEMA Student Identification (SID) number:**

Step 1: To register, go to https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid

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Crisis Communications Spokespersons Training for Executives and Senior Leaders

Date:	*Friday, September 14, 2018*
Time:	*8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.*
Location:	Leland Building, 1919 Smith Street, 10th Floor, Houston (Bayou Room)
Why?	Focusing on the things that can “make” or “break” senior leaders: • How to maintain a positive relationship with the media in the first hours of a crisis. • How to be a team player rather than merely an individual agency spokesperson. • How to maintain a good media relationship after the crisis is over.
Topics:	• A quick primer on what to expect from persistent, aggressive reporters covering your problem, crisis or event. • A total of three on-camera exercises. Each exercise is critiqued in an open forum by the instructor. • Training based on a realistic scenario chosen by the client. • Instructors and role players with significant journalism and media relations experience.
Who Should Attend?	Agency Leaders, Senior Managers that have agency responsibility that would place them in a situation to be approached by the media in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.
Cost:	$1,175.00 per person

Registration

Name_______________________________ Agency_______________________________

Address:_______________________________ _______________________________

Phone_______________________________ Email_______________________________

Position Title: _______________________________

Register early! This class will be limited to twelve participants!

Mail registration to:	Federal Executive Board 2320 La Branch Street, Rm 1107 Houston, TX 77004
Email to:	LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov

Cancellation Policy: Understanding that unforeseen circumstances may preclude an individual from attending, cancellations will be permitted through August 29, 2018. However, after that date, registrations must be honored by the individual or agency involved. If you are unable to attend, substitute attendees are authorized and encouraged!